

## Harry Caray's sues to block Navy Pier makeover

By: [Alby Gallun](#) November 20, 2013



One rendering of plans for Navy Pier. In the summertime, the ice rink will be a fountain.

Harry Caray's Restaurant Group has gone to court to block a plan to revamp Navy Pier, saying the project would block views of Lake Michigan and the Chicago skyline from its restaurant there.

The planned makeover includes 30-foot tall trees and planter boxes in front of the Harry Caray's Tavern that also would attract rats and pose a fire hazard, according to a lawsuit filed yesterday in Cook County Circuit Court. But the blocked views present the biggest problem, the suit says.

The plantings "will eliminate the currently unobstructed views from the outdoor seating area, including its view of Lake Michigan, the city skyline and Navy Pier's bi-weekly fireworks displays," the complaint says.

The planters also will "block the pedestrians' view of Harry Caray's and its recognizable sign and block their access to the restaurant — dramatically diminishing Harry Caray's visibility and its ability to attract customers and damaging its business," according to the suit.

Harry Caray's representatives discussed its concerns about the plan with Navy Pier officials but "weren't able to get them to move on any of the big issues," said the restaurant's lawyer, Donald Tarkington, managing partner at Novack & Macey LLP.

Navy Pier Inc., the non-profit that runs the pier, said it "will vigorously defend our position in court," according to a statement.

"We are disappointed that the owners of Harry Caray's have decided to try and stop this improvement," the statement said. "In anticipation of the start of renovations, we met numerous times with the

managing partner, Mr. Grant DePorter, in an effort to address his concerns without compromising the quality or construction timetable of the renovations."

Under [a plan unveiled in May](#), Navy Pier officials want to give the tourist destination a more contemporary, less-cluttered look, with new fountains trees and gardens. The first phase of the project will cost about \$150 million.

Harry Caray's alleges the plan will violate a provision of its lease that protects its "quiet enjoyment" of the property. The revamp will "injure Harry Caray's property rights and drastically cut into Harry Caray's business and result in a quantifiable loss of revenue and profits for Harry Caray's," the complaint says.